

Good Morning Chairman Lawlor and Chairman McDonald,

My name is Frank Guerra. I am the owner of K5 Arms Exchange, located in Milford, CT. I would like to open my letter by stating that I understand the concern that exists today in stopping crime and violence and wanting to aid law enforcement agencies protect the liberty and freedom of the citizens of this state. As a free citizen of this state I also feel that it is my duty to address any and all legislation that infringes on those principles of freedom and liberty that we celebrate every day. Senate Bill #353, the "Microstamping Proposal" is one piece of legislation that is as unconstitutional as it would be ineffective.

Owning a handgun for sporting and defense purposes has been recognized and accepted as a constitutional right by the Supreme Court of the United States. Thousands of law-abiding Connecticut residents have owned and maintained their handguns with the utmost care and respect for the rule of law. This bill, proposed as a measure of "public safety" is yet another example of legislation aimed at punishing honest, law-abiding, legal gun owners, while not addressing that most fundamental of facts...Criminals do not obey laws.

The Microstamping proposal bill # S.353 offers nothing to aid law enforcement and everything to deny Connecticut citizens access to new pistols. It is a de-facto handgun ban, something that relies solely on emotion and bad science as opposed to fact and logic. Some very basic questions about microstamping have never been answered scientifically and the legal ramifications of such a bill have also not been thoroughly examined. Begin with these questions...how many violent crimes are committed with "new" handguns? What does a stamped casing at a crime scene do? Is it evidence that will even be permissible in a court? What prevents criminals from picking up spent casings from legally owned and operated shooting ranges? And the list could go on...

Advocates of such measures have offered the same arguments time and again. These arguments are based in anecdotes, rely on emotion, and jump to conjecture. We've heard this testimony before. In fact, similar proposals have failed in IL, MD, HI and even in VA, post-VA Tech tragedy. These are states gun control advocates would consider "strong" gun law states. They DO NOT take into account the effect of such legislation on law-abiding gun-owners or the businesses that rely on them. Most importantly, we have not seen scientific or researched arguments that illustrate the effectiveness of such a measure on public safety. Indeed, even in CA where it has passed, it remains to be seen if the bill can even be complied with and new pistols are at risk of being banned effective, Jan 1, 2010 for sale in CA.

In addition, given that most recovered crime scene guns are at least 12 years old, and many are much older, any practical or theoretical benefit from microstamping is moot. Crime scene guns won't have this technology in place, anyway.

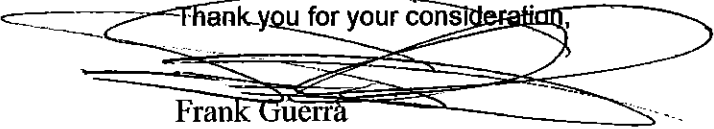
Another unfortunate fact that cannot be ignored is this...criminals will find ways around this law, honest gun-owners will not. A criminal will pick up spent casings at a crime. Honest gun-owners do not commit crimes. A criminal will trade out firing pins (something that takes less than 10 minutes to do), a law-abiding citizen will not. A criminal will break into more houses in search of older "untraceable" weapons, putting those legal, honest, law-abiding gun owners at risk in their own homes.

How does this bill affect those of us who own and operate guns safely and legally? It will deny us access to newer pistols that will not meet this unnecessary restriction. It will drive the firearms and ammunition industries even further away from our state, driving increases in handgun and ammunition prices. It will force many established businesses to close their doors, eliminating jobs and tax revenues at a time where every job and dollar is important.

How does this bill affect criminals? That is a question that has not been answered and will not be answered.

In summary, I urge the Committee to reject this proposal because it offers no public safety value; it is counter productive, unconstitutional and economically undesirable as 1,600 CT jobs could be lost. It will also serve to put many FFL dealers out of business in Connecticut, losing a valuable source of sales tax revenue in one of the few segments of the local economy that is flourishing in this unprecedented period of economic recession. I ask that the Committee engage the Sportsmen's Community to pursue measures that punish criminal acts with firearms, enforce those laws that are already on the books and protect the interests of law abiding citizens.

Thank you for your consideration,



Frank Guerra  
K-5 Arms Exchange, Inc.